



Surgical Treatment for Achilles Tendon Injury

The Achilles tendon is the largest and strongest tendon in the body and is extremely important to allow us to walk, run and jump. Nearly half of all sports-related injuries involves the Achilles tendon or the ankle. This is due to overuse, trauma or more commonly where there is a sudden increase or sudden change in activity.

Symptoms

- A pop or crack sound may accompany the tendon rupture
- Difficulty to push off when your walk
- Inability to stand using only the injured leg

Surgery for Achilles Tendon Rupture

Mild injury can be treated conservatively but if the tendon is torn or ruptured, the tendon needs to be stitched back together and this is usually done for a recent injury. If the injury occurred more than 2 weeks ago, the tendon would most likely have retracted further apart and in order to repair the Achilles tendon, additional procedures such as tendon lengthening or grafting (using the tendon from another part of your leg or foot) may be required.



Using the latest techniques, the Achilles tendon can be repaired through smaller incisions which are less painful and heal better.

Rehabilitation after Achilles Tendon Surgery

After surgery, your tendon will take time to recover and strengthen. You will need to wear a cast or walking boot for up to 6 to 7 weeks after surgery. The cast or boot will hold your foot pointed downward so as not to stress the newly repaired tendon. Your doctor or physiotherapist will discuss your needs and circumstances with you and advise you on how and when to do your rehabilitation exercises. The following is one of many examples.

Click to view Evan Rodriguez video on Achilles Tendon Injury Rehab
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h9q6hc7uWkI>

Phase 1 Post-operative Exercises (to control swelling and protect the tendon)

- Toes curls
- Heel Slides

Phase 2 Post-operative Exercises (to have no pain and start ankle exercises)

- Ankle pumps (dorsi and plantar flexion)
- BAPS Boards
- ABCs Whirlpool
- Straight Leg Raising (with the boot on)
- Stationary Bicycle (with the boot on)

Phase 3 Post-operative Exercises (to achieve full range of ankle motion)

- Inversion & Eversion Isometric Exercises
- 4-way Theraband Exercises
- Straight Leg Raising with Cuff Weights
- Stationary Bicycle
- Bridging on Physic Ball
- Towel Gathering Inversion & Eversion

Phase 4 Post-operative Exercises (to achieve full strength and power of the ankle)

- Calf Raises (start with both legs and then to the affected leg alone)
- Balance Training (stand on affected leg first with eyes open and then eyes closed)
- Wall, Dorsiflexion & Towel Calf Stretching
- Plyometrics (lateral & 4-square jumping)

Jogging and Running Exercises (to prepare you to return to sports)

- Jogging in straight, figure of 8 and cutting styles
- Sprinting in short bursts
- Jumping and landing
- Single leg jump test

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